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**SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES**

**OCTOBER TERM, 1952**

**No. 244**

**LEONA ANDERSON MAY,**

*Appellant,*

*vs.*

**OWEN ANDERSON**

**APPEAL FROM THE SUPREME COURT OF THE STATE OF OHIO**

**STATEMENT AS TO JURISDICTION**

**RALPH ATKINSON,**  
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*Counsel for Appellant.*

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IN THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

No. 32980

APPEAL FROM THE COURT OF APPEALS OF COLUMBIANA COUNTY,  
OHIO

OWEN ANDERSON,

*Plaintiff-Appellee,*

*v.s.*

LEONA ANDERSON MAY,

*Defendant-Appellant*

**JURISDICTIONAL STATEMENT**

This jurisdictional statement supports a petition for appeal to the Supreme Court of the United States from the judgment of the Supreme Court of Ohio in *Anderson v. May* (1952), 157 Ohio St. 436, 105 N. E. 2d 648. It and the accompanying petition for appeal and assignment of errors have been duly filed with the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Ohio and are presented for allowance on July 1, 1952, being within 90 days after the denial by the Supreme Court of Ohio on April 23, 1952 of appellant's application for rehearing (25 *Ohio Bar* 273).<sup>1</sup> 28 U.S.C., § 2101(c).

<sup>1</sup> The Supreme Court of Ohio rendered its judgment adverse to appellant on April 2, 1952 (25 *Ohio Bar*, pages 198 and 199). Rule XX of the Supreme Court of Ohio (147 Ohio St., lxxv) authorizes the filing of an application for rehearing within 14 days. On April 16, 1952, in order to exhaust her State remedies, appellant duly filed an application for rehearing. As stated in the text, it was denied on April 23, 1952 and the judgment of the Supreme Court of Ohio thereupon became "final".

*Gypsy Oil Company v. Escoe* (1927), 275 U.S. 498, 72 L. Ed. 393, 48 S. Ct. 112.

## NATURE AND HISTORY OF CASE

This case originated in the Probate Court of Columbiana county, Ohio on July 5, 1951, as a habeas corpus action by Owen Anderson, father of Ronald, Sandra and James Anderson, minors under 14, to obtain possession of said children from their mother, the appellant Mrs. May. It was brought to enforce against her, in Ohio, a purported Wisconsin award to plaintiff Anderson of the children's custody, made in a Wisconsin divorce case also brought by plaintiff Anderson.

### The Issue

Habeas corpus is a strictly "legal" remedy in Ohio. *Ohio General Code*, § 12161.<sup>2</sup> And, in Ohio, a mother's "legal" right to possession of her children is "equal" to their father's. *Ohio General Code*, §§ 8032<sup>3</sup> and 10507-8 (114 Ohio Laws 385).

Thus, since habeas corpus cannot in Ohio be used to determine chancery questions concerning the welfare of children, and since nothing short of a valid judicial award of children's custody to one of their parents can give that parent a "legal" right to possession of his children

<sup>2</sup> All citations to the *Ohio General Code* are citations to the official "General Code of Ohio of 1910", with the following exception: Where the section number is followed by a citation to the official "Laws of Ohio", cited thus, "— Ohio Laws —", the section is more recent than 1910 and will be found in the *Laws of Ohio* in the volume and at the page indicated.

<sup>3</sup> § 8032 became § 8605-3 in a recodification of the domestic relations laws of Ohio effective August 28, 1951, after the beginning of this litigation. (124 Ohio Laws 195.)

superior to the "legal" right of the other parent, the only purpose for which habeas corpus can be used between parents in Ohio is the purpose for which it is employed here, namely, to enforce a purported prior award to the plaintiff parent of the children's custody; and the only issue possible is the issue here, namely, the validity of the purported prior award. *In re Corey* (1945), 145 Ohio St. 413, 61 N.E. 2d 892. Cf., *Finlay v. Finlay* (1925), 240 N.Y. 429, 148 N.E. 624, 40 A.L.R. 937. But see *New York ex rel. Halvey v. Halvey* (1947), 330 U.S. 610, 91 L. Ed. 1133, 67 S. Ct. 903.

Hence, the concurring opinion in the Court of Appeals of Columbiana county to the contrary notwithstanding,<sup>4</sup> the question of what custody award the welfare of the children in this case requires, not only *was not* tried in this case, but, to appellant's regret, it *could not* be tried in this case. The sole issue that *could* be tried, and the only issue that *was* tried, was the validity of the purported Wisconsin

<sup>4</sup> The Presiding Judge of the Court of Appeals dissented from the majority's holding that the Wisconsin court had jurisdiction, but concurred in affirming the judgment of the Probate Court on the ground that the Probate Court's judgment was in effect an award of custody to the father and that the "evidence" showed such an award to be "for the best interests of the children."

As is evident from the text, no evidence was admissible on any such subject. None was admitted! As the trial court states in its opinion (R. 25):

"In passing it might be stated that this entire Habeas Corpus proceeding is based upon the Wisconsin decree of divorce, granting custody and control of said children to the father, or Petitioner, in this case."

And, although the reporter did not take it, the trial court explicitly warned counsel that the pleadings raised but one issue, namely, the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin court to make the purported custody award in question, and that they were to confine themselves to it. Since the issue of the children's welfare was not tried, it is unfair to plaintiff Anderson to draw any inference as to that issue from evidence that came in on other issues, although the fair inference, if any were to be drawn, would certainly be the opposite of that stated in said concurring opinion.

award and its consequent title, or lack of title, to "full faith and credit" under Article IV, § 1 of the Constitution of the United States.

### Summary of Facts

The following facts pertinent to the validity of the purported Wisconsin award are undisputed:

Originally, the parties and their children lived in Wisconsin, where the mother and children had been born. The mother removed to Ohio with the children. Admittedly, she thereupon became (and still is) domiciled in Ohio. Subsequently, plaintiff Anderson filed his divorce case in Wisconsin. Throughout the Wisconsin case, the children were living and physically present with their mother in Ohio. There was no service of any kind on the children, who were not made parties, and only substituted service on the mother, had by handing her a Wisconsin summons in Ohio. There was no appearance in the Wisconsin case by either the mother or the children.

### •Reserved Questions in Halvey Case, Supra

This case thus presents two of the questions reserved by the Supreme Court of the United States in the *Halvey* case, *supra* (330 U.S., 615-6, 91 L. Ed., 1136, 67 S. Ct., 906-7), namely:

*First*, can a court have jurisdiction to award a child's custody when the child is outside the State at the time the court enters its decree and the court has jurisdiction neither of the child's person nor the person of the parent who has the child with him outside the State?

*Second*, there having been only constructive service on the parent who has the child outside the State, is that parent in any way bound by the custody decree?



## Holdings of the Courts Below

The trial court, which each intervening court has either expressly or in effect affirmed, answered both the foregoing questions in the affirmative, an answer contrary to the answer seemingly indicated by the first two of the three concurring opinions in the *Halvey* case, *supra*.

The specific grounds on which the trial court sustained plaintiff Anderson's demand for "full faith and credit" for the purported Wisconsin award are these:

It held that mere "domicil" of a child or incompetent in a State, *of itself and without more*, gives the courts of that State jurisdiction to award his custody, even though he is physically present in and thus within the sole power of another State or country hundreds or thousands of miles away! Next, the trial court held that § 7996,<sup>5</sup> *Ohio General Code*, vests legal power to control the domicil of the children of a marriage exclusively in the husband and father and denies the children's mother the power to affect or alter her children's domicil in any way without their father's authority and consent.

It then found as a fact (R. 30, 82)<sup>6</sup> that plaintiff Anderson did not consent to or authorize a change in the children's domicil from Wisconsin to Ohio.

It is evident that, if the two holdings set forth above were correct, it would follow from said finding of fact that the children's domicil remained in Wisconsin, that the Wisconsin court had jurisdiction to award their custody as it saw fit, and that its purported award was valid and

<sup>5</sup> § 7996. The husband is the head of the family. He may choose any reasonable place or mode of living and the wife must conform thereto.

<sup>6</sup> Throughout, the record page references are to the pages of the transcript of the record prepared by the Clerk of the Supreme Court of Ohio to forward to the Clerk of the Supreme Court of the United States.



entitled to "full faith and credit." The trial court so found and granted enforcement of said purported award, ordering Mrs. May, in whose custody the children had been remanded at the outset, to deliver them to plaintiff Anderson.

### Federal Questions Were Raised

In holding that the bare "domicil" of a person within a State gives its courts jurisdiction to adjudicate him to be a minor or incompetent and make an order purporting to commit him to custody—even where he is outside the State and its courts have jurisdiction neither of his person nor of the person of the individual, if any, in whose custody he is—the trial court sustained a contention by plaintiff Anderson.

Mrs. May had opposed this contention strenuously, urging that any such proposition must, of necessity, rest on doctrines unknown to the law of a free country, and violate principles of public law respecting the jurisdiction of courts, generally accepted in the Western world, that are deeply embedded in the Federal Constitution. Specifically, she contended that she and the children alike are constitutionally immune to any extension of "full faith and credit" to the purported Wisconsin award for the reasons:

(1) That it is implicit in Article IV, § 1 that "full faith and credit" is due a judgment or decree only if, according to the principles just mentioned, it has been made "*with jurisdiction*" (possibly because, otherwise, the proceedings in which it is made are not truly "*judicial*"). *D'Arcy v. Ketchum* (1850), 11 How. 165, 13 Led. 648. *Thompson v. Whitman* (1844), 18 Wall. 457, 21 Led. 897. *Pennoyer v. Neff* (1878), 95 U.S. 714, 24 Led. 565.

(2) That any construction of Article IV, § 1 to require "full faith and credit" for said purported award when

made *without* jurisdiction, according to those principles, would render Article IV, §1 repugnant to the 5th Amendment, which protects both Mrs. May and her children from being deprived by Federal action of their liberty without due process of law. And

(3) That by enforcing against her and the children a decree which, according to civilized principles of jurisdiction, was made without jurisdiction, *Ohio* would deprive her and the children of their liberty without due process of law, contrary to the 14th Amendment. *Pennyroyer v. Neff*, above. *Griffin v. Griffin* (1945), 327 U.S. 220, 228-9, 90 L.ed 635, 640, 66 S.Ct. 556, 560.

Mrs. May likewise argued strenuously that if §7996 *Ohio General Code* were construed to take from her the legal power to alter her children's domicile without plaintiff Anderson's authority and consent, it would, as thus construed and applied, violate each and every provision of §1 of the 14th Amendment.

The arguments in the trial court are of course not part of the record. *Before* judgment in that court, however, the substance of Mrs. May's foregoing contentions was reduced to record as Mrs. May's exception 4 to the trial court's separate findings of fact and law (R. 77-82) as follows (R. 83-4):

"Defendant Leona Anderson May excepts \* \* \* (4) To the findings of law contained in paragraphs b, c and e, and to the portion of the findings of law contained in that part of paragraph d that begins with the words 'The plaintiff husband in this case' and continues to the end of said paragraph d, on the ground that they are contrary to law, involve an erroneous application to this case of Article IV, §1 of the Constitution of the United States, are repugnant to the 5th Amendment and §1 of the 14th Amendment to said Constitution, and so construe and apply General Code §7996 as to

render that statute repugnant to said § 1 of said 14th Amendment." (R. 83-4).

The trial court overruled said objections by entering judgment against Mrs. May (R. 113).

After judgment in the trial court, Mrs. May renewed said objections by a motion for new trial (R. 85-6), which the trial court overruled (R. 86). The wording in the motion for new trial was virtually identical with that just quoted, except that the objections were now directed also to "the judgment of the Court, which is based on said findings".

### THE COURT OF APPEALS

From the Probate Court, Mrs. May appealed to the Court of Appeals of Columbiana county, Ohio. There she raised said objections at the outset in her assignment of errors (R. 106). The assignment of errors copies almost verbatim the language already quoted above from Mrs. May's exceptions and motion for new trial. The Court of Appeals overruled said assignments of error by affirming the judgment of the Probate Court (R. 100).

### THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

Mrs. May appealed from the Court of Appeals to the Supreme Court of Ohio both of right, on the ground that Federal constitutional questions were involved, and also on condition that a "motion to certify" (a discretionary remedy similar to certiorari) be allowed by said court (R. 99). Mrs. May again raised said constitutional objections at the outset in her assignment of errors (R. 95-6), of which the pertinent portions read as follows:

"3. The Court of Appeals misconstrued and misapplied §1 of Article IV of the Constitution of the United States, and, further, so construed and applied said section as to render the same repugnant to the 5th

Amendment and to §1 of the 14th Amendment to said constitution; and, in doing each, the court erred.

"4. The Court of Appeals erred in that its judgment in this case is repugnant to § 1 of the 14th Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, and, further, in that said judgment sustains a construction and application by the Probate Court of §7996 (now §8002-2) of the Ohio General Code that renders said statute repugnant to said §1 of said 14th Amendment."

On March 27, 1952, the case was heard before a full bench consisting of six Judges and the Chief Justice.

On April 2, 1952, with three judges—Stewart, Taft and Zimmerman, J.J.—not concurring,<sup>7</sup> the Supreme Court of Ohio passed on Mrs. May's said assignments of error by dismissing her appeal of Right on the ground that "no debatable constitutional question is involved." 25 *Ohio Bar* 198. *Anderson v. May* (1952), 157 Ohio St. 436, 105 N.E. 2d 648. The court also overruled Mrs. May's motion to certify. 25 *Ohio Bar* 199.

On April 16, 1952, within the fourteen days allowed by Rule XX of the Supreme Court of Ohio (147 Ohio St. lxxv), Mrs. May exhausted her state remedies by duly filing an application for rehearing, which, on April 23, 1952, was denied. 25 *Ohio Bar* 273.

As previously stated, the children were remanded in Mrs. May's custody at the outset. (See appendix, page 39 below.) The judgments of the trial court and Court of Appeals requiring her to surrender the children to plaintiff Anderson were at once superseded by filing proper supersedeas bonds. The Supreme Court of Ohio has graciously stayed the issuance of its mandate to allow the perfecting of this appeal. The children therefore remain in Mrs.

<sup>7</sup> The Supreme Court of Ohio admits a case only if an absolute majority of the members sitting votes to admit.

May's custody under the trial court's preliminary order pending the action of the Supreme Court of the United States.

## STATUTES BELIEVED TO SUSTAIN JURISDICTION

The statutes believed to sustain the jurisdiction in this case of the Supreme Court of the United States are the following, each of which is quoted from Title 28, *United States Code*:

"§1257. Final judgments or decrees rendered by the highest court of a State in which a decision could be had, may be reviewed by the Supreme Court as follows: \* \* \*

"(2) By appeal, where is drawn in question the validity of a statute of any state on the ground of its being repugnant to the Constitution, treaties or laws of the United States, and the decision is in favor of its validity.

"(3) By writ of certiorari, \* \* \* where any title, right, privilege or immunity is specially set up or claimed under the Constitution \* \* \* of \* \* \* the United States."

"§2103. If an appeal to the Supreme Court is improvidently taken from the decision of the highest court of a State in a case where the proper mode of review is by petition for certiorari, this alone shall not be ground for dismissal; but the papers whereon the appeal was taken shall be regarded and acted upon as a petition for writ of certiorari and as if duly presented to the Supreme Court at the time the appeal was taken. \* \* \*"

(The attorneys for Mrs. May believe, as will appear, that the jurisdiction on appeal is clear. That, however, does not excuse them from claiming for her the benefit if needed of the important curative statute last quoted.)



## JURISDICTIONAL QUESTIONS; AUTHORITIES CITED

### I. Judgment of Highest State Court?

A judgment of the Supreme Court of Ohio dismissing an appeal of right on Federal constitutional questions on the ground that "no debatable constitutional question is involved" is a judgment of the highest court in Ohio "in which a decision could be had" and, if final, is reviewable by the Supreme Court of the United States. *Tuney v. Ohio* (1927), 273 U.S. 510, 71 L.ed. 749, 47 S.Ct. 437, 50 A.L.R. 1243. *Van Huffel v. Harkelrode* (1931), 284 U.S. 225, 76 L.ed. 256, 52 S.Ct. 115, 78 A.L.R. 453. *Haley v. Ohio* (1948), 332 U.S. 596, 92 L.ed. 224, 68 S.Ct. 302.

### II. A Final Judgment?

The Probate Court rendered judgment against Mrs. May for the surrender of the children to plaintiff Anderson. Said judgment left nothing further to be done and concluded the litigation. It was therefore "final." *Radio Station WOW, Inc. v. Johnson* (1945), 326 U.S. 120, 89 L.ed. 2092, 65 S.Ct. 1475.

The effect of the judgments of the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court of Ohio being simply to confirm the judgment of the Probate Court, they also would seem clearly "final."

### III. "Right, Privilege or Immunity" Claimed?

As we have seen, the issue in this case is whether the purported Wisconsin award of the custody of the children in this case is valid and therefore entitled, under Article IV, §1 of the Federal Constitution, to "full faith and credit" and enforcement in Ohio. The issue arose as follows:

Invoking Article IV, §1, plaintiff Anderson produced the purported Wisconsin award and demanded "full faith and

credit" for it. Mrs. May, quite apart from her complaint against §7996, *Ohio General Code*, defended on the ground that she and the children were immune to any extension of "full faith and credit" to said purported award because, according to principles (a) implicit in Article IV, §1 itself, (b) imposed on the United States by the 5th Amendment and (c) imposed on both Wisconsin and Ohio by §1 of the 14th Amendment, the purported award was made without jurisdiction and was therefore void.

Thus, from the start, each of the parties has claimed a "right, privilege or immunity" under the Federal Constitution. It is believed, therefore, that even if the validity of a State statute were not involved, the Supreme Court of the United States would have jurisdiction at least to grant certiorari.

#### IV. Validity of a State Statute Drawn in Question?

As previously shown, Mrs. May has in every court attacked the validity of §7996, *Ohio General Code*, on the ground that, as construed and applied in this case, it is repugnant to §1 of the 14th Amendment. The statute reads as follows:

"§7996. The husband is the head of the family. He may choose any reasonable place or mode of living and the wife must conform thereto."

The official publication of this statute is in the General Code of Ohio of 1910, page 1702. In a recodification of the domestic relations laws of Ohio, effective August 28, 1951 (after the beginning of this litigation), it became §8002-2, *Ohio General Code*. 124 *Ohio Laws* 183.

#### V. Judgment "in Favor of" Validity?

As already pointed out, the State judgment is that §7996, above, deprived Mrs. May of the legal capacity to change her children's domicile from Wisconsin to Ohio, that,



because of this, the children's domicile remained in Wisconsin, and that because their domicile remained in Wisconsin, Wisconsin had jurisdiction to make its purported award of their custody.

Had the Ohio courts held §7996 invalid, or even construed it differently, they would have been forced to find that the children were domiciled in Ohio, not Wisconsin, during the pendency of the Wisconsin case, that Wisconsin was thus without jurisdiction, and that its purported custody award was therefore void and entitled to no faith or credit whatever—which would have led to the opposite result from the one reached.

Thus the decision of the Ohio courts was a decision "in favor of" the validity of §7996, Ohio General Code.

### **Jurisdictional Questions; Conclusion**

For the foregoing reasons, it is urged that all purely technical requirements for jurisdiction are satisfied. We therefore turn to the inquiry whether the Federal questions involved are substantial.

## **SUBSTANTIALITY OF FEDERAL QUESTIONS**

### **Exact Scope of Questions**

The "domicil" or "legal settlement" of a person, the place of which he is an "inhabitant", is presumably the place where he "resides" within the meaning of the first sentence of the 14th Amendment:

§1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they *reside*."

Because of the ambiguity of "residence", it is "domicil" that is used throughout this statement to mean this con-

*Milliken v. Meyer* (1940), 311 U.S. 457, 463-4, 85 L. ed. 278, 283-4, 61 S. Ct. 339, 343.

nection with a State which, in the case of a citizen of the United States, makes him a citizen of the State also and gives the State such jurisdiction of him as arises out of his consequent allegiance to it.

This mention of the effect of domicile on State citizenship and allegiance is made here because the recent decision of the Supreme Court of the United States in *Harisiades v. Shaughnessy* (1952), 342 U.S. 580, 72 S. Ct. 512, may affect sharply the jurisdictional significance of "domicil" when considered by itself:

The jurisdictional import of "domicil" in a context such as this<sup>9</sup> appears to have rested wholly on an assumption that, when a person makes his home in a State or country and it permits him to remain there, he thereby undertakes allegiance to it<sup>10</sup> and it thereby accepts his allegiance, an allegiance qualified only by his continuing technical allegiance to the country of which he is a citizen or subject. In a country where this assumption is true, it follows that the country acquires (subject to the qualifications implicit in the qualification just stated) the same rights, jurisdiction, and duties with respect to him, including the duty of protection, as it has in the case of its nationals.

The *Harisiades* case, however, appears to hold, quite flatly, that by acquiring a domicile here, a non-citizen acquires no more rights and incurs no more obligations than does a

<sup>9</sup> As is evident, what we are concerned with in this case is jurisdiction to adjudicate alleged minors and incompetents to be such and commit them to custody—a matter of exclusively common law and chancery cognizance. We are in no way concerned with the utterly alien principles of the canon law that govern jurisdiction in divorce and jurisdiction to probate wills and grant letters testamentary and of administration.

<sup>10</sup> As is made clear by *Blackmer v. United States* (1932), 284 U.S. 421, 76 L. ed. 375, 52 S. Ct. 252, and by the comments on it in *Muliken v. Meyer*, note 8 above, jurisdiction over an absentee rests, not on power, but on duty—the duty imposed on the absent person by his allegiance to the State or country from which he is absent.

foreign tourist. A necessary corollary would seem to be that the bare "domicil" of a person in the United States confers no more *jurisdiction* over him than there is over a tourist who has passed through.

Thus, it becomes important that Mrs. May and her children were all born in the United States (R. 21), have at all times been "subject to the jurisdiction thereof" (R. 21-3), and are therefore all *citizens*.

Because they are citizens, the jurisdictional significance of *bare* domicil is not what we are concerned with in this case. In January and February, 1947, each of them, because he was a citizen of the United States, also was a citizen of and therefore did owe *allegiance* to a State, which, on the facts here, was either Ohio or Wisconsin.

The "domicil" of each of them, the place where he was then "residing" within the meaning of §1 of the 14th Amendment, is, regardless of the interpretation properly to be put on the *Harisiades* case, still significant, although perhaps only because it determined for each of them which of those States was then the State of his citizenship. Thus, the Federal questions in this case are these:

### **The Federal Questions**

1. Where a citizen of the United States, domiciled in and consequently a citizen of Ohio, is served in *Ohio* with a *Wisconsin* summons, does the Wisconsin court thereby acquire jurisdiction of the *person* of the Ohio defendant?

2. Can it be held, compatibly with the principles of public law respecting the jurisdiction of courts that are implicit in Article IV, §1 of the Federal Constitution and are protected against Federal violation by the 5th Amendment and against State violation by §1 of the 14th Amendment, that the bare domicil and consequent citizenship in a State of a citizen of the United States who is no longer present in the State, give the courts of that State jurisdiction, without notice to him, to ad-

judicate him to be a minor or incompetent and make an order purporting to commit him to custody?

3. When so construed as to take from a wife who is a citizen the liberty and power to change her own or her children's domicile and consequent State citizenship from one State to another, is Ohio General Code §7996 repugnant to §1 of the 14th Amendment to the Federal Constitution?

### Facts <sup>11</sup>

The appellant, Mrs. May, was born in Wisconsin (R.21) and there married, in the middle 1930's, the plaintiff, Owen Anderson (R. 21). He had come from near Lisbon, Ohio, where his people still live (R.40-62). Following appellant's and plaintiff's marriage, they lived in Waukesha, Wisconsin and there had three children (R.21), Ronald, born December 18, 1938, Sandra, born July 26, 1942, and James, born August 7, 1945.

Some time before or during the year 1946, serious marital troubles developed (R.14). In December, 1946, the parties agreed that appellant should go with the children to Lisbon, Ohio, where she, plaintiff and the children had often visited, there to be alone to think out the problem the parties' difficulties had created (R. 9, 14). However, the trial court finds it was the "understanding" of the parties (R. 79-80), or at least of plaintiff Anderson (R. 23-4), that appellant's stay in Ohio would be only "temporary" and that she would return to Waukesha with the children before anything "permanent" was done. (Appellant has attacked these findings throughout as contrary to the manifest weight of the evidence, R. 83, and testified that plaintiff Anderson

<sup>11</sup> In the courts below, counsel for plaintiff Anderson accepted the statement we there made of the facts as accurate and complete. That statement has of course had to be pruned drastically for use here. We have tried to include, however, an accurate statement of all facts still pertinent here.

fold her she must decide either to "come back to him or separate." R. 14).

Appellant came to Ohio with the children on December 26, 1946 (R.9). After three or four days in Lisbon had given her the chance she sought to think quietly, she made up her mind not to go back to Wisconsin, but to stay in Lisbon, Ohio permanently, and she settled down there with the three children to live (R.12, 21-2). She has lived in Lisbon ever since (R.21).

On New Year's day, 1947, plaintiff Anderson, in Wisconsin, called appellant, in Lisbon, by telephone (R.12). During the conversation appellant exclaimed, "Owen, I'm not coming back!" During this or another conversation in the next day or two — so plaintiff Anderson claims (R. 9, 12) and the trial court finds (R. 30) — he demanded that she return the children to Wisconsin and she refused to return them. (*I.e.*, it is his own testimony, found by the courts below to be true, that from this time forward, what he claims was originally a "temporary" visit by appellant and the children to Ohio had—without his consent or authority, to be sure—in fact become a *permanent* stay there.<sup>12</sup> Indeed he has stipulated, with respect to appellant (R. 21-2), that appellant's *domicil* became Ohio when, in the closing days of 1946, she decided not to go back to Wisconsin and settled down with the children to live in Lisbon.)

In the final telephone conversation, on Sunday, January 5, 1947, plaintiff Anderson told appellant (R. 15), "Tomor-

<sup>12</sup> As we have seen, the courts below have so construed and applied *Ohio General Code* § 7996 as to deprive Mrs. May of the *legal* power to change her children's home from Wisconsin to Ohio. Because of their construction of § 7996, the constitutionality of which is one of the two main questions in this case, the courts below hold that, as a matter of *law*, the children's absence from Wisconsin was only "temporary". The object of the parenthetical passage in the text is to dissociate this conclusion of law from the facts.



row, you are due for one of the biggest surprises of your life."

On January 6, 1947, plaintiff filed a petition against appellant for divorce in the County Court of Waukesha county, Wisconsin (R. 12, 15). Appellant was the only defendant (R. 90); the children were *not* made parties.

Appellant and the children continued to live in Lisbon, Ohio (R. 22), and, shortly thereafter, the Wisconsin court caused a Wisconsin summons and a copy of plaintiff Anderson's petition to be delivered to appellant in Ohio (R. 22). This was the *only* service in the Wisconsin case (R. 22).

One of the children was ill and appellant was without money when she received the papers from Wisconsin (R. 16, 19). She sought the advice of counsel at once, however, and was told to keep out of the Wisconsin case and stay with the children in Ohio (R. 15) — which advice<sup>13</sup> she followed (R. 22).

On February 3, 1947, a day less than a month after plaintiff Anderson had filed his petition, the Wisconsin court granted him a divorce (R. 22). Its decree (R. 90) contained, among other things, this paragraph:

"It is further ordered, adjudged and decreed that the care, custody, management and education of the minor children of the parties be and is hereby awarded to the plaintiff, subject to the right of the defendant to visit the children at any and all reasonable times."

This is the part of the decree that plaintiff Anderson brought this action to enforce. The entry of the decree puts

<sup>13</sup> We were not the lawyers Mrs. May consulted at this point. However, as will appear, the advice she received was supported by the virtually unanimous holdings of the State courts of last resort, as well as by all the standard legal encyclopedias. *E.g.*, 19 *Corpus Juris*, 341, § 790. 27; *Corpus Juris Secundum*, 1163, § 303(b). 14 *Ohio Jurisprudence*, 552-3, § 149.

a period to the facts pertinent to its validity,<sup>14</sup> the issue here.

### Why the Questions Are Believed Substantial

In *New York ex rel. Halvey v. Halvey* (1947), 330 U.S. 610, 615-6, 91 L.ed. 1133, 1136, 67 S. Ct. 903, 906-7, the Supreme Court of the United States expressly reserved decision on four questions. Two of those questions are ques-

<sup>14</sup>The further history of the case, which is of some interest, may be briefly stated as follows:

Late in February, 1947, plaintiff and a village police officer appeared at the children's and appellant's home in Lisbon armed with a copy of said decree (R. 10, 23, 78-9). Together, plaintiff and the policeman got possession of the children and plaintiff at once removed them to Wisconsin (R. 23).

Originally, the facts were stipulated (R. 6, 21). In consequence, the record is silent concerning appellant's efforts to recover her children during the next four years and her contacts with them except for a stipulation (R. 23) that she never submitted to Wisconsin's jurisdiction by appearing in the case there.

As for the parties, plaintiff Anderson shortly remarried (R. 57) and has another child (R. 49). Appellant also remarried, becoming Mrs. James F. May (R. 48), but has no other children.

On July 1, 1951, plaintiff Anderson returned to Lisbon with the children on a visit to his people (R. 23, 40-61). He let the children go to the home of their mother, the appellant Mrs. May, and, on the advice of counsel, she refused to surrender them (R. 23).

On July 5, 1951, accordingly, plaintiff Anderson brought this action on the purported Wisconsin award. Mrs. May appeared voluntarily with the children in open court forthwith and, after a brief preliminary hearing, they were remanded in her custody (R. 6). The order of remand (see page 39 below) forbade the children's removal from the county "until this matter is finally determined", but gave plaintiff Anderson a "right of visitation with" them.

After the case had been heard but before judgment had been entered, plaintiff Anderson had the children with him and, in defiance of the trial court's order, absconded with them to Wisconsin (R. 32, 39-62).

Ultimately, after correspondence and contempt citations had proved futile (R. 32-6), Mrs. May, acting in precise accordance with instructions given her by her present counsel, effected a recovery of the children from Wisconsin (R. 45-71).

The trial court thereupon entered its judgment against Mrs. May (R. 75-6). As previously stated, its judgment was at once superseded by appropriate supersedeas bond and Mrs. May now holds the children in accordance with the original order of remand just referred to.



tions in this case (page 4 above). We urge, therefore, that it is already decided that this case involves Federal questions of substance.

## I

The courts below have answered the first question in this case by holding, we believe correctly, that serving a Wisconsin summons in Ohio on a citizen of Ohio does *not* give the Wisconsin court jurisdiction of the person of the Ohio defendant.

To our surprise, although the Supreme Court of the United States has often enough *said* that such is the law, *e.g.*, in *Pennoyer v. Neff* (1878), 95 U.S. 714, 24 L.ed. 565, we do not find that it has ever actually *decided* the point. Therefore, particularly since this question must be answered in order to answer the second of the questions reserved in the *Halvey* case, it appears to qualify as "a federal question of substance not heretofore determined by" the Supreme Court.

## II

The next question in this case is whether the domicile and consequent citizenship in a State of a United States citizen who is not present there, are enough, alone and without more, to give the courts of the State jurisdiction to adjudicate him to be a minor or incompetent and make an order purporting to commit him to custody. This question appears never to have been decided by the Supreme Court of the United States.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup> The Supreme Court of the United States' closest approach to this question appears to have been in connection with *Seeley v. Seeley* (1907), 30 App. D.C. 191, 12 Ann. Cas. 1058, in which the Court of Appeals of the District of Columbia *denied* "full faith and credit" to a purported Illinois custody award, made while the child was in the District of Columbia. The Supreme Court of the United States *denied* certiorari, 209 U.S. 544, 52 L. ed. 919, 28 S. Ct. 570.

The extreme narrowness of the question is the first thing to be noted.

### NO JURISDICTION IN PERSONAM

As will be observed, the Wisconsin court had no jurisdiction of anyone's person except plaintiff Anderson's.

(A) It had no jurisdiction of Mrs. May's person: As was long ago said in *Pennoyer v. Neff*, above:

"Process from the tribunals of one State cannot run into another State, and summon parties there domiciled to leave its territory and respond to proceedings against them."

(B) The Wisconsin court had no jurisdiction of the persons of the children: They were not named parties to the Wisconsin case. There was no service on them of any kind.<sup>16</sup>

### JURISDICTION IN REM?

Thus, since the Wisconsin court acquired no jurisdiction of the persons of *either* the children or Mrs. May, the question is whether the Wisconsin court in any way acquired in

<sup>16</sup> We do not concede that service on the children *outside* Wisconsin could have given the Wisconsin court jurisdiction of their persons, even assuming them to have been citizens of Wisconsin. As previously stated, *Blackmer v. United States* (1932), 284 U.S. 421, 76 L. ed. 375, 52 S. Ct. 252, and *Milliken v. Meyer* (1940), 311 U.S. 457, 85 L. ed. 278, 61 S. Ct. 339, make it clear that obtaining jurisdiction of the *person* of an absent citizen by service on him *outside* the jurisdiction rests, *not* on power, but on *duty*—a duty imposed on him by his allegiance to the State of which he is a citizen to return in obedience to its summons. But when the complaint against him is that he is a minor or mental incompetent and ought to be committed to custody, where is the duty? The allegation of minority or other incompetence has to be either true or false. If it is true, the alleged minor or incompetent can hardly be presumed capable of grasping what is expected of him, nor can it be presumed that he is physically free to return. If, on the other hand, the allegation is false and he is in truth perfectly competent, what "duty" has he to return and defend himself against a charge that he is not? Obviously, *he* is not a transgressor, on either state of the facts. And, if the charge is false, he is transgressed against.

*rem* jurisdiction of the children, so as to be able to determine the rights respecting the children of the children themselves, of Mrs. May, and indeed of all the world, *without* jurisdiction of any of their persons.

### *No Jurisdiction in Rem of Children's Bodies*

As we have seen, the Wisconsin court did not have the children in its possession or in that of its officers, and did not have jurisdiction of the person of the individual who *did* have possession of the children. Nor were the children in Wisconsin, dubious as their mere presence in the State would have been as a foundation of jurisdiction under the holding in *Pennoyer v. Neff*. The Wisconsin court did not even have the attenuated control over them that would have existed if, outside the State, they had been in the possession of plaintiff Anderson's servants. Thus, plainly, the Wisconsin court did *not* have jurisdiction *in rem* of the children, considered as physical objects.

### *Jurisdiction of Any Other Res?*

Did it have such jurisdiction of any other *res* as would empower it, consistently with the principles of jurisdiction embedded in the Federal Constitution, to cut off Mrs. May's rights respecting her children, and the children's rights respecting her, by committing them to plaintiff Anderson's exclusive custody?

The only possibility of such a *res* lies in an analogy to divorce. It is now settled that the "personal relationship" between husband and wife, the "marriage tie" so to speak, is a *res* of which a court can get sufficient jurisdiction to cut it off by having before the court one party to the relationship who is domiciled within the court's jurisdiction and by giving the other party, wherever he may be, reasonable notice of the proceedings.

Analogizing from divorce jurisdiction to jurisdiction to adjudicate alleged minors and incompetents to be such and

then commit them to custody is of course a most unsafe exercise; the latter jurisdiction rests on the jurisdictional principles of the common law and equity, not on the utterly foreign canon law principles that govern jurisdiction in divorce. Proceeding, with this *caveat*, to look for relevant "personal relationships", two will be found in the case of children, namely, the relationship between a child and his father and the relationship between a child and his mother.

Conceivably, if there had been notice to the children, Wisconsin might have acquired sufficient jurisdiction of one of those relationships, to wit, the "personal relationship" between the children and plaintiff Anderson, to cut it off. *Yarborough v. Yarborough* (1933), 290 U. S. 202, 78 L.ed. 269, 54 S. Ct. 181, 90 A.L.R. 924 (in which, however, the child was personally present in open court during the proceedings).

But, even in divorce, if a court has only one of the parties before it and thus has jurisdiction of only one end of such a "personal relationship", the court's jurisdiction is limited to cutting off or curtailing the relationship. The court has no jurisdiction to increase, or even to fix, the personal obligations and burdens under it of the party to it who is absent. *Mansfield v. McIntire* (1840), 10 Ohio 27. *Cox v. Cox* (1869), 19 Ohio St. 502, 2 Am. Rep. 415; 20 Ohio St. 439. *Woods v. Waddle* (1886), 44 Ohio St. 449, 8 N. E. 297. *Weidman v. Weidman* (1897), 57 Ohio St. 101, 48 N. E. 506 (cited for its summing up of earlier cases). *Bay v. Bay* (1912), 85 Ohio St. 417, 98 N. E. 109. And see *Estin v. Estin* (1948), 334 U. S. 541, 92 L. ed. 1561, 68 S. Ct. 1213, 1 A.L.R. 26.

#### *No Jurisdiction of Any Other Res*

Thus, after pursuing our tentative analogy to divorce jurisdiction to its logical limit, we find that all the jurisdiction the Wisconsin court could have got, even by

giving the children notice, would have been power to *cut off* the "personal relationship" between plaintiff Anderson and the children. It could have got no power whatever to do what it purported to do, namely, *increase* the weight with which that relationship bore on the children by imposing on the children a duty to stay only with their father and forswear their mother.

In fact, there was of course *no* notice to the children. Thus the Wisconsin court can have had no jurisdiction even to cut off the relationship between plaintiff Anderson and the children.

Next, it was *not* plaintiff Anderson that the Wisconsin court purported to "divorce" from the children. It was the children's *mother*, Mrs. May!

But "divorcing" Mrs. May from her children was something the Wisconsin Court could not do, on any theory, unless it had jurisdiction of, as a *res*, the "personal relationship" between Mrs. May and her children. And Mrs. May and the children were not before the Wisconsin court; they were all *in Ohio*. Wisconsin, therefore, did not have hold of *either* end of that *res*; the whole of it was in Ohio. The "personal relationship" between Mrs. May and her children was therefore wholly *outside* Wisconsin's power.

Therefore, if it is jurisdiction *in rem* that we are dealing with here, it is a jurisdiction *in rem* without any *res*.

Thus, the facts are such that, for the courts below to reach the result they did reach in this case, they *had* to hold what they *said* they held, namely, that by reason of the bare domicile of these children in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin courts already had jurisdiction to dispose of the children's custody long before the children left Wisconsin and long before any case or proceeding was filed in any



particular Wisconsin court (presumably from the children's birth since they were *born* domiciled in Wisconsin).<sup>17</sup>

Consequently, so the courts below implicitly hold, since complete and perfect jurisdiction to dispose of the children's custody was, when the children left, already attached to the children and vested in every Wisconsin court capable of receiving such jurisdiction, it is immaterial that no jurisdiction to dispose of the children's custody ever vested in this particular Wisconsin court *after* the children left. No notice, no service of process, the courts below hold, could have added anything to the jurisdiction to dispose of the children that the County Court of Waukesha county already possessed *without* notice and *without* process.

### THE NARROW QUESTION

Thus, the first of the two major questions here does boil down to this extremely narrow, not to say naked, question:

Can it be held, compatibly with the principles of public law respecting the jurisdiction of courts that are implicit in Article IV, §1 of the Federal Constitution and are protected against Federal violation by the 5th Amendment and against State violation by §1 of the 14th Amendment, that the bare domicil and consequent citizenship in a State of a citizen of the United States who is no longer present in the State, give the

<sup>17</sup> The text of the holdings of the courts below is as follows. The Probate Court held:

"The Court farther finds that, in as much as the children were legally domiciled in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin court had jurisdiction over the subject matter and could *validly* award the care, custody and control of the children . . ."

The Court of Appeals held:

"The children were domiciled in Wisconsin until December 26, 1946, where the Wisconsin court had exclusive jurisdiction, and that court did not lose its jurisdiction by reason of their going with their mother to Ohio . . ."

courts of that State jurisdiction, without notice to him, to adjudicate him to be a minor or incompetent and make an order purporting to commit him to custody?

We urge that the question is substantial for several reasons. The prime reason is that there are only two assumptions on which any such jurisdiction could be supported, namely:

*First*, that human beings are the chattel property of the State to which they are subject, and therefore that, whether they are inside that State or outside it, it has power, through its legislature or courts, to deliver a bill of sale or deed of gift of any of them to whomever it may select, which the courts of the place where he is will be bound to honor; or

*Second*, the assumption of the Civil law, on which most if not all Western absolutisms have been built, that supreme and uncontrolled power exists in the emperor (or State) "*cum populus ei et in eum omne imperium suum et potestatem concedit*", which we translate, probably barbarously, "because to him and in him the people have yielded up all their power and authority." In short, said assumption is, the State, whether embodied in an emperor, a king or a legislature, holds an unlimited and irrevocable power of attorney from the "people", every one of them, and if the State chooses to sell a member of the people into slavery, or execute him, no wrong has been done him because it is his own act. Legally, he has sold himself into slavery, or committed suicide.

Briefly indicating the answer we expect to make to each assumption, the primary answer to each is that it is false in fact:

*Firstly*, the States of the United States were, at their inception, and are now, free and voluntary associations for governmental purposes of the very human beings whom the



first assumption would make chattels of the State, and were *never*, any of them, absolute monarchies composed of an autocrat and a few nobles ruling a population of serfs.

*Secondly*, while such a thing as a surrender by the people of all their power, originally to a "*dictator*" and later to an emperor, did repeatedly happen in Rome, no such thing has happened in the United States. To the contrary, our ancestors, who were well aware of the seductive qualities of Civil law doctrine in general and of the danger of a reception of the text quoted above in particular, aimed at it, not one, but two Articles of the bill of rights, namely:

IX. "The enumeration in the Constitution of certain rights shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the *people*."<sup>18</sup>

X. "The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the *people*."

The State constitutions sometimes manage to be still more explicit; *e.g.*, Article I, § 20 of the Constitution of Ohio, at the close of the Ohio bill of rights, provides:

"§ 20. This enumeration of rights shall not be construed to impair or deny others retained by the people; and *all* powers, not herein delegated, remain with the *people*."

The foregoing clauses of course express merely one of the many legal effects of the basic common law rule, adhered to rigidly by the common law courts since the end of the 12th century, that a "*free man*" *does not have the legal capacity*, short of committing a crime, to alienate, destroy or permanently impair his free status, even by his own act,

<sup>18</sup> All emphasis inside quotations, wherever it occurs in this statement, has been inserted by counsel for appellant unless the contrary is expressly noted.

much less the capacity to "yield up" such a power to anyone else. The idea of "unalienable rights" is a good deal older than Locke, as is attested, in different ways, by the Year Book cases and by the fact that three kings' pretensions that a surrender to the crown of "all the people's power" had taken place cost each his throne and one his head.

### *The State Decisions*

We urge that the question is substantial for the further reason that the answer given it by the courts below is contrary to the virtually unanimous answer heretofore given the question by State courts of last resort. Typical cases are *De La Montanya v. De La Montanya* (1896), 112 Cal. 101, 44 P. 345, 32 L.R.A. 82, 53 Am. St. Rep. 165 (child custody). *Grinbaum v. Superior Court* (1923), 192 Cal. 566, 221 P. 651 (alleged adult incompetent), and see 221 P. 635. *Payton v. Payton* (1924), 29 N.M. 618, 225 P. 576, and *May v. May* (1931), 233 N.Y. App. Div. 519, 253 N.Y.S. 606 (child custody).

Although we have by now examined several hundred cases,<sup>19</sup> we have found not a single case where "full faith and credit" has ever been given an award of the custody or guardianship of a minor or incompetent *unless* the court making the award had either (a) physical possession of the minor or incompetent, or (b) jurisdiction of his person, or else (c) jurisdiction of the person of the parent or other individual or institution who was in possession of the minor or incompetent. (Class c of course includes the almost innumerable cases where the court had both parents before it and the child was in the possession of one of them.)

<sup>19</sup> We have thus far examined between 400 and 500 cases in the course of preparing this appeal. The cases are so numerous, however, that we do not claim to have exhausted them even yet. Indeed, we know we have not.

Typical cases where "full faith and credit" has been denied for lack of all or part of these jurisdictional requisites are: *Kline v. Kline* (1881), 57 Iowa 386, 10 N.W. 825, 42 Am. Rep. 47. *Duryea v. Duryea* (1928), 46 Idaho 512, 269 P. 987. *Steel v. Steele* (1928), 152 Miss. 365, 118 S. 721. *Ex parte Erving* (1931), 109 N.J. Eq. 294, 157 A. 161. *Gillman v. Morgan* (1947), 158 Fla. 605, 29 S. 2d 372. And see *Black v. Black* (1924), 110 Ohio St. 392, 144 N.E. 268.

Moreover, what should be true in constitutional principle, namely, that regardless of who else is bound by proceedings to which the child or incompetent is not a party, he is never *himself* bound by an award of his custody unless the court has obtained jurisdiction of *his* person, appears to be settled law, with *no* cases contra. *In re Bort* (1881), 25 Kan. 308, 310 (Opinion by the late Mr. Justice Brewer). *Avery v. Avery* (1885), 33 Kan. 6, 5 P. 418, 422. *People ex rel. Allen v. Allen* (1886), 40 Hun. 611, 620-1. *Grinbaum v. Superior Court* (1923), above. And see *Re Alderman* (1911), 157 N.C. 507, 73 S.E. 126, 129, 39 L.R.A. n.s. 988, 992-3, and *Wear v. Wear* (1930), 130 Kan. 205, 285 P. 606, 616, 72 A.L.R. 425, 440-1.

No respectable authority supports the holding of the courts below. Among the hundreds of cases we have looked at, only two even say anything that supports it:

The later of the two is *Beckmann v. Beckmann* (1948), — Mo. App. —, 211 S.W. 2d 536, which is not a decision of a court of last resort. It is decided on the sole authority of the first of the two cases, *Minick v. Minick* (1933), 111 Fla. 469, 149 S. 483. The other cases that *Beckmann v. Beckmann* relies on are all cases where the court had jurisdiction of the person of the individual in possession of the child. Indeed, even in *Beckmann v. Beckmann*, although the parent

in possession of the child appeared specially, he nevertheless appeared in the case throughout.

*Minick v. Minick*, the first case, asserts that the bare domicile of a child in Florida, without more, gives the Florida courts jurisdiction to award his custody. But the only authority the Florida court cites is against any such proposition, and the court admits that, without the child, or jurisdiction of the persons of both his parents, its award would be entitled to *no* "faith and credit" outside Florida. On top of this, the court's assertion of such a jurisdiction is sheer dictum. As the court holds at the outset, the appellant waived and cured the original lack of jurisdiction of her person by appearing generally and not specially in the trial court to perfect her appeal. And, although, as we have seen, Missouri later picked the dictum up, it did not last long in Florida. It was tacitly overruled in *State ex rel. Rasco v. Rasco* (1939), 139 Fla. 349, 190 S. 510 (where the shoe was on the other foot and Florida held that New Jersey, being without the child, was without jurisdiction), and in *Giachetti v. Giachetti* (1946), 157 Fla. 259, 25 S. 2d 658.

The aberrant views expressed in the *Minick* and *Beckmann* cases probably result from a misapprehension and misapplication of the authorities holding that the domicile of a child or incompetent in one State *restricts* the jurisdiction of other States to interfere with his custody—a quite different matter. E.g., *Duryea v. Duryea* (1928), above, and *Lannan v. Gregory* (1907), 100 Tex. 587, 99 S. W. 542, 10 L. R. A. n.s. 690, 123 Am. St. Rep. 809, now overruled by *Wicks v. Cox* (1948), 146 Tex. 489, 208 S. W. 2d 876, 4 A. L. R. 2d 1.

### *Frequency with which Question arises*

We further urge that the question whether the bare domicile and consequent citizenship in a State of an alleged minor

or incompetent, without more, gives the courts of that State jurisdiction, to adjudicate him to be such and make an order purporting to commit him to custody, is substantial because of the frequency with which it arises in the every day life of the American public.

Certainly it recurs constantly in the practice of an lawyer whose practice is at all general. We have never before had it on an appellate level. That, however, is because heretofore, in cases in which either of us has been involved, the court of first instance has held the opposite of what the trial court held here and the correctness of its holding was not questioned. Even more often, of course, the question has not arisen in the court room at all because the lawyer whose client's child was outside the State in the custody of the other parent has thought he knew better than even to ask for custody.

We should perhaps continue by urging that the question is substantial because of the consistent injustice to which the rule propounded by the courts below would necessarily lead.

The vice of a rule that a man may, without notice, be adjudicated a lunatic and committed to custody merely because he is "domiciled" inside a court's jurisdiction is, however, evident without comment.

The same thing can be said of a holding that the bare domicile of a citizen inside a court's jurisdiction gives it power, without notice and without jurisdiction of his person, to adjudicate him to be a minor and commit him to custody—although, in the case of an alleged minor, a deposit of any such jurisdiction at his "domicil" takes on an added touch of horror from the still imperfect rules for ascertaining a child's "domicil", which, as has been said, are quite capable of putting it "somewhere the child never has been, is not now, and probably never will be."



## III

Turning to the third question here, it is plain enough that the courts below hold it to be unobjectionable for a *father* to move his children's home from one State to another without their mother's consent, but vicious in the extreme for a *mother* to do so without the father's consent.

It is not clear, however, whether the courts below hold that § 7996 operates directly to deprive a wife of the power to change her children's domicile, or whether it does so indirectly by depriving her of the power to change her *own* domicile.

The reason for the doubt is that, as mentioned at the outset, *Ohio General Code* §§ 8032 and 10507-8 (114 Ohio Laws 385) categorically provide, and *In re Corey* (1945), 145 Ohio L. 413, 61 N. E. 2d 892, flatly holds, that a wife's legal powers and rights with respect to her children are, in all particulars, specifically including "custody", equal in Ohio to her husband's. How, then, if she has power to change her own domicile, can she lack power to change her children's?

Yet it seems impossible that the courts below have held that a married woman is without power to change her own domicile. Ohio has for two-thirds of a century held that a married woman *can* have a domicile of her own. *Thompson v. Love* (1884), 42 Ohio St. 61, 80. *Van Fossen v. State* (1881), 37 Ohio St. 317, 320, 41 Am. Rep. 507. *Cox v. Cox* (1869), 19 Ohio St. 502, 2 Am. Rep. 415.

This uncertainty as to the exact holding of the courts below has been allowed for in stating the third question:

3. When so construed as to take from a wife who is a citizen the liberty and power to change her own or her children's domicile and consequent State citizenship, from one State to another, is Ohio General Code § 7996 repugnant to § 1 of the 14th Amendment to the Federal Constitution?

Regardless of which construction is attributed to the courts below, we urge that construction violates, in several ways, § 1 of the 14th Amendment:

“§1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.”

The first sentence of the 14th Amendment declares the existence of an unqualified right and privilege in every citizen of the United States, for any reason he deems satisfactory, or for no reason at all, to transfer his citizenship and allegiance from one State of the United States to another by the simple process of moving his home from the first State to the second.<sup>20</sup> The fact that the immediate occasion for the declaration of this privilege was the protection of newly created citizens with black skins, in no way implies that the privilege was to be theirs alone. The intention of the 14th Amendment, which could not be more clear or explicit, was to make not only them, but *all* citizens of the United States, *equal* citizens with *equal* rights before the law, and to have *no* citizen of the United States who is legally a citizen merely of a second, third or fourth class.

Immediately after the adoption of the 14th Amendment, the Supreme Court of the United States said, in *Cheever v. Wilson* (1870), 9 Wall. 108, 124, 19 L.ed. 604, 608:

“It is insisted that Cheever never resided in Indiana: that the domicile of the husband is the wife's, and that she cannot have a different one from his. The con-

<sup>20</sup> See the *Slaughter House Cases*, (1873), 16 Wall. 36, 21 L. ed. 394, 409-10.

verse of the latter proposition is so well settled that it would be idle to discuss it. The rule is that she may acquire a separate domicile whenever it is necessary or proper that she should do so."

Again, in 1913, the same Court, in *Williamson v. Osenton*, 232 U.S. 619, 58 L.ed. 758, 34 S.Ct. 442, said:

"The only reason that could be offered for not recognizing the fact of the plaintiff's actual change [of domicile], if justified, is the now vanishing fiction of identity of person. But if that fiction does not prevail over the fact in the relation for which the fiction was created, there is no reason in the world why it should be given effect in any other. However it may be in England, that in this country a wife in the plaintiff's circumstances may get a different domicile from that of her husband for purposes of divorce is not disputed, and is not open to dispute. *Haddock v. Haddock*, 201 U.S. 562, 571, 572. This she may do without necessity and simply from choice, as the cases show, and the change that is good as against her husband ought to be good against all."

As far as is known, there is no expression by the Supreme Court of the United States that would give any more encouragement than the foregoing to the view that married women may lawfully be excluded from the privilege conferred by the opening sentence of the 14th Amendment.

We urge that, if the Ohio courts have held that §7996 deprived Mrs. May of the privilege of moving her home from Wisconsin to Ohio, it follows from the foregoing that Ohio has made and enforced a law that abridges a privilege given by the Constitution of the United States to all citizens of the United States regardless of their color, sex or other previous condition of servitude.

We urge it further follows that Ohio has taken from Mrs. May a liberty granted by the Constitution of the United

States to all citizens of the United States without regard to color, sex or other previous condition of servitude. Ohio has done so, as is obvious, for no reason other than that she is a *woman* who has married. We urge that there is nothing about being a female that makes it any less arbitrary or capricious to deny the liberty to establish a separate home to a woman who marries while extending that privilege to a man who marries, than it would be to deny that privilege to a man who marries while extending it to his wife.

We therefore urge that, if §7996 has been so applied, it has, in addition to abridging Mrs. May's privileges as a citizen of the United States, deprived her of her liberty without due process of law and denied her the equal protection of the laws.

If, on the other hand, the holding attributed to the Ohio courts is that §7996 left Mrs. May free to change her own home from Wisconsin to Ohio, but nevertheless took from her the power and liberty to change the home and citizenship of her children, we urge it follows that this construction and application of §7996 renders it void as attempted State legislation upon a subject matter that the first sentence of the 14th Amendment has taken from the States and made one of exclusively Federal cognizance:

If a State may take from a citizen mother the legal power to shift the home and State citizenship of her citizen children *into* that State, it may likewise take that power from a citizen father. And if a State may lawfully take from citizen *parents* the power to shift the home and State citizenship of their citizen children into the State, it may likewise take from them, and from all adults, the power to shift their own homes and State citizenships into the State, thus defeating in its entirety a main purpose of the 14th Amendment's opening sentence.

Lastly, if §7996 is thus applied, it still follows that §7996 deprives Mrs. May of her liberty without due process of law and denies her the equal protection of the laws:

In *Meyer v. Nebraska* (1923), 262 U. S. 390, 399, 67 L. ed. 1042, 1043, 43 S. Ct. 625, in which the United States Supreme Court overturned a State statute that made it an offense for parents to have their children taught German, the Court said:

"The problem for our determination is whether the statute, as construed and applied, unreasonably infringes the liberty guaranteed to the plaintiff by the 14th Amendment. 'No State . . . shall deprive any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law.'

"While this court has not attempted to define with exactness the liberty thus guaranteed, the term has received much consideration, and some of the included things have been definitely stated. Without doubt, it denotes not merely freedom from bodily restraint, but also the right of the individual \* \* \* to marry, *establish a home and bring up children*, to worship God according to the dictates of his own conscience, and, generally, to enjoy those privileges long recognized as essential to the orderly pursuit of happiness by free men."

In *Pierce v. Society of Sisters* (1925), 268 U.S. 510, 69 L.ed. 1070, 1078, 45 S.Ct. 571, the Court said:

"Under the doctrine of *Meyer v. Nebraska* \* \* \*, we think it entirely plain that [an Oregon statute forbidding parents to send their children to private schools] unreasonably interferes with the liberty of parents and guardians to direct the upbringing and education of children under their control."

A parent's right not to have his children arbitrarily taken from him by the State was perhaps not entirely absent



from the mind of the Court when, in *West Virginia v. Barnette* (1943), 319 U.S. 624, 638, 80 L.ed. 1628, 1638, 63 S.Ct. 1178, 1185, the Court said:

"The very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the reach of majorities and officials and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts. One's right to life, liberty, and property, to free speech, a free press, freedom of worship and assembly, and other fundamental rights, may not be submitted to a vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections."

And see *Prince v. Massachusetts* (1943), 321 U.S. 158, 165-6, 88 L.ed. 645, 652, 64 S.Ct. 438, 442.

Ohio recognizes that the mere fact of being a female does not render a parent of children unfit to possess the power and liberty to establish a home for them and maintain them in it. In Ohio as everywhere, that liberty is freely accorded to *unmarried* mothers. Ohio likewise recognizes that the *marriage* of a parent of children does not unfit him to possess that liberty. As this case illustrates, it accords the liberty freely to *married* fathers. How, then, can a statute be anything but arbitrary and capricious which provides that, by *marrying* the father of her children, a *female* parent forfeits the power and liberty she previously possessed to establish a home for her children and maintain them in it?

Thus, as construed and applied, §7996 deprives Mrs. May of this liberty arbitrarily and capriciously. We therefore urge that it has taken her liberty without due process of law. And since §7996 as construed and applied arbitrarily discriminates against married females in favor of married males in a matter respecting which, if any discrimination could be reasonable, the reasonable discrimination would

be the other way, §7996 has denied Mrs. May the equal protection of the laws.

What we believe to be the principal subsidiary questions raised by the construction and application given *Ohio General Code* §7996 by the courts below have now been exposed. We urge that they are plainly important and substantial.

Although some of these questions have been touched on in, among other cases, *Crandall v. Nevada* (1868), 6 Wall. 35, 18 L.ed. 745, the *Slaughter House Cases* (1873), 16 Wall. 36, 21 L. ed. 394, and *Edwards v. California* (1941) 314 U.S. 160, 86 L.ed. 119, 62 S.Ct. 164, none of them has been settled. All the questions therefore qualify as "questions not heretofore determined" by the United States Supreme Court.

Moreover, to the extent that prior decisions can be said to intimate anything, the holding of the courts below is contrary to those intimations. To that extent, therefore, the decision of said questions by the courts below is "probably not in accord with applicable decisions of this court."

WHEREFORE: Appellant respectfully urges that all technical jurisdictional requirements are satisfied, that the Federal questions involved are important and substantial, and that the Supreme Court of the United States therefore has jurisdiction of this appeal by virtue of Title 28, *United States Code*, §1257(2).

Respectfully submitted,

RALPH ATKINSON,  
F. W. SPRINGER,  
*Attorneys for Appellant.*

## APPENDIX

## PROBATE COURT

*Order of July 5, 1951 (R. 132:)*

(Still in force.)

This day this cause came on to be heard and was submitted to the Court upon an agreed statement of facts. And it appearing that the question before this Court is one entirely of law, this cause is continued to July 13, 1951, at 9:30 a.m., pending which time counsel for the petitioner and for the respondent have agreed to file briefs.

It is the order of this Court that pending a final hearing of this case, the minor children concerned, to wit, Ronald Anderson, Sandra Anderson and James Anderson, are to remain with Mrs. Leona Anderson May at her home on the Lisbon-Columbiana road, Route 5, Lisbon, Ohio, there to remain and be within the jurisdiction of this Court at all times until this matter is finally determined, and the said children shall not be removed from Columbiana county.

Pending the final determination of this cause, the petitioner herein, Owen Anderson, shall have the right of visitation with the minor children concerned at any and all reasonable times.

## OPINION OF PROBATE COURT

*Part of Record (R. 21-31)*

July 13, 1951

TOBIN, J:

This cause came on to be heard on the petition of Owen Anderson for Writ of Habeas Corpus, against Leona Anderson May, his former wife, and involved the three minor children of the parties: Ronald Anderson, Sandra Anderson and James Anderson.

In this action an agreed Statement of Facts was submitted to the Court whereby the parties agreed and stipulated as follows:

"That the defendant, Leona Anderson May, is a native of the State of Wisconsin and that the plaintiff and defendant were married in the State of Wisconsin and were residents of and domiciled in that State up to the latter part of the month of December, 1946, at which time the defendant left the State of Wisconsin with the aforesaid children and came to the State of Ohio; that the said children which are the subject of this action in Habeas Corpus, to wit: Ronald Anderson, Sandra Anderson and James Anderson, were born in the State of Wisconsin and at all times resided in that State with their parents, plaintiff and defendant, up until the last part of December, 1946, at which time the defendant brought them into the State of Ohio; that the plaintiff, Owen Anderson, at all times has been, and is now, a resident of and domiciled in Waukesha County in the State of Wisconsin.

"That the said defendant, Leona Anderson May, established a separate domicile in the State of Ohio the latter part of December, 1946, and has ever since that time been domiciled in Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio.

"That on February 5, 1947, the plaintiff herein was granted a divorce in the County Court of Waukesha, State of Wisconsin. That at the time said divorce was granted, and at the time the petition for said divorce was filed, as well as at all other times in between, the defendant, Leona Anderson May, was in Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio; and had with her at all said times the three minor children aforesaid, Ronald Anderson, Sandra Anderson and James Anderson.

"That the only service made on the defendant in connection with said divorce proceedings, was that made by the Sheriff of Columbiana County, Ohio, in which he personally handed the defendant a copy of the summons from Waukesha County, Wisconsin; and a copy of the divorce petition filed in the County Court of said

Waukesha County, Wisconsin. That the defendant never entered her appearance in the County Court of Waukesha County, State of Wisconsin, and filed no waiver, answer or demurrer therein. That the plaintiff obtained a decree of divorce, which among other things, adjudged and decreed that the care, custody, management and education of the minor children of the parties was awarded to the plaintiff, subject to the right of the defendant to visit said children at any and all reasonable times. That said decree was entered by default in the absence of any appearance by the defendant.

"That thereafter the plaintiff came to Lisbon, Columbiana County, Ohio, and, accompanied by a police officer of the Village of Lisbon, Ohio, demanded and obtained the aforesaid children from the defendant. That the plaintiff has retained custody of said minor children since February of 1947, having taken them back with him to Waukesha County, Wisconsin.

"That no further legal proceedings of record have been had in said divorce case since the aforesaid divorce decree was entered.

"That on July 1, 1951, the plaintiff brought the aforesaid children with him on a visit to Columbiana County, Ohio, and voluntarily permitted the children to go on a visit for a limited period of time to their mother's, the defendant herein. That the mother, the said defendant herein, has refused to surrender said children to the plaintiff, and the plaintiff has filed this action to recover the possession and custody of said children."

In addition to this agreed Statement of Facts, the parties here are unable to agree as to the fact whether or not the children were in the State of Ohio, with the consent of the plaintiff, or father, Owen Anderson. Testimony was taken, both parties testifying, and the Court does find that the children were brought into the State of Ohio by the mother, at the time they actually came into the State of Ohio with the mother, with the knowledge and consent of the father, the understanding of the father being that such visit was temporary, that before anything permanent was



done regarding the marital status of these parties, including the children, the children were to be returned to the State of Wisconsin; and that he did ask for the return of the children prior to January 6, 1947, the date the petition for divorce was filed.

### DECISION

The agreed statement of facts together with the facts found by the Court raises the following questions:

1. Can the Wisconsin court decree be collaterally attacked in this Ohio court; or under the full faith and credit provision of the United States Constitution, must this Court accept such decree at its face value?

This question has been decided many times by the Courts of Ohio, as well as by the Federal Courts — who have held that while full faith and credit will be given to divorces granted in other states, nevertheless, where the divorce was granted upon service of summons by publication and no personal service was had within the State granting the divorce, the decree is not effective beyond the dissolution of the marriage contract, and as to other matters it may be collaterally attacked as to all other related subjects. *Cox vs. Cox*, 19 O. S. 502; and 14 O. Jur. 553. Under these decisions, this Court is permitted to entertain pleadings and evidence relative to this Wisconsin decree to establish whether or not said decree was valid as pertaining to the subject matter at hand, to wit: the custody of these children. In other words, it is the finding of this Court that it legally has the right to question that much of the Wisconsin decree, that deals with the custody of the children which it purports to determine. In passing it might be stated that this entire Habeas Corpus proceeding is based upon the Wisconsin decree of divorce, granting custody and control of said children to the father, or Petitioner, in this case.

2. The next question to be determined is whether or not the purported personal service upon the defendant, Leona Anderson, now May, through the Sheriff of Columbiana County, Ohio, amounted to personal service in Wisconsin.
3. The Court was unable to obtain, nor could counsel obtain

for the Court, the exact statutes on service in the State of Wisconsin. However, in Keezer on *Marriage and Divorce*, Third Edition, at page 1236, the statement is given as follows:

“Personal service outside of the State is equivalent to publication in the State of Wisconsin.”

The Court will accept, therefore, this statement to be the law of the State of Wisconsin, and, therefore, this case will be treated as if service had been made by publication.<sup>21</sup>

This brings us logically to the next question, namely:

2. There being no personal service on the defendant, Leona Anderson May, in the divorce case in Wisconsin, and it being agreed by the parties that the children were not physically present in the State of Wisconsin, either at the time of filing the divorce petition, or at the time of obtaining the divorce, did the Wisconsin Court have the authority to decree the custody of these minor children to the Petitioner herein, their father?

There are in the United States two schools of theory on that point. 14 *Ohio Jurisprudence* 552, §149, indicates that Ohio follows that theory which states that personal service or presence of the children within the State is necessary to give the Court jurisdiction to decide custody of minor children.<sup>22</sup> However the statement in *Ohio Jurisprudence* is based upon two cases therein cited: *Cohen vs. Judge*, 13 O. Appellate 449; and *Keenan vs. Keenan*, 17 Ohio Dec. N. P. 581. Reading of these cases throws a different light on the subject.

The *Cohen* case had a peculiar set of facts. In that case the children had never been out of the State of Ohio, except on summer vacations. The mother had gone to Illinois and obtained an Illinois divorce after two years' or more, absence from Ohio. Said Illinois court granted to her the

<sup>21</sup> The Wisconsin statutes are quoted in the opinion of the Court of Appeals at page 54 below.

<sup>22</sup> It will be discovered that the trial court cites no example of any theory other than the theory it states above.

care, custody and control of the child involved, based upon its presence in Illinois during Summer vacation. The Ohio courts held, in the *Cohen* case, that a foreign court in a divorce proceeding on service by publication against a defendant in Ohio, has no jurisdiction or control over the defendant's children, domiciled in Ohio, and an award of custody of the child by such court is of no effect; that such foreign court could not obtain jurisdiction over said children by their being temporarily out of the State, their domicile remaining in Ohio. The court emphasized the fact, that the children were domiciled in Ohio, ~~had~~ always been domiciled in Ohio, and had never been domiciled in the State of Illinois, that their presence during Summer vacations was not enough to give Illinois jurisdiction.<sup>23</sup>

*Black v. Black*, 110 O. S. 392, another case cited, holds as follows: The mother in Ohio, had filed an action in divorce. The father contested the same, particularly that part relating to the custody of the minor child, and introduced a Massachusetts decree, obtained by service by publication in which the matter of divorce and the custody had been settled by the Massachusetts court. The Court refused to recognize the Massachusetts divorce, in so far as it dealt with the custody of the child remanded. One of the questions raised in the *Black* case is whether or not the Court of Common Pleas of Franklin County, Ohio, had jurisdiction at all. The Court first determined that it did have jurisdiction but because the defendant had submitted himself to its jurisdiction. However, the child involved in the case had already been made a ward of the Juvenile Court of Franklin county and placed in the custody of the mother, and the child had been with the mother in Ohio for nearly a year before the divorce decree in Massachusetts had been obtained.<sup>24</sup>

<sup>23</sup> The trial court is in error in its statement of the facts of *Cohen v. Judge* (1920), 13 Ohio App. 449, 32 Ohio C. C. ns. 457. The children were never in Illinois until *after* the Illinois decree of divorce. Due to this error respecting the facts, the trial court misreads the holdings in *Cohen v. Judge*.

<sup>24</sup> *Black v. Black* (1924), 110 Ohio St. 392, 144 N.E. 268, on all its facts, is more in point than appears from the Probate Court's opinion, and is perhaps directly in point.

In *Re Paul J. Poage*, 87 O. S. 72, the child was brought into the State of Ohio by the mother, without the knowledge or consent of the father, the father at all times remaining in Kentucky. An arrest [of the father] for non-support followed. In a Habeas Corpus hearing the Ohio court held, among other things, that the legal domicile of the child remained in Kentucky with the father.<sup>25</sup>

*Keenan vs. Keenan*, 17 O. Dec. N.P. 581 contained these facts: The parties had originally lived in Missouri. The mother took the child, or children, fled from Missouri, came to Ohio and lived here two or three years. The question arose whether or not the foreign decree could affect her rights to the children in Ohio. The Court held that it could not, where there had been no original service. In that case, the divorce was granted on a cross-petition on which there was no personal service made. However, the best interest of the children was taken into consideration in deciding this case.

This brings us to the crux of this case, namely: Can the State of Wisconsin grant the care, custody and control of these children who have been physically absent from the State of Wisconsin for a period of ten days, prior to the filing of the petition, and where the father has consented to such absence only on a temporary basis; and, secondly: Where was the legal domicile of the children? It is the belief of this Court that the legal domicile of the children is very important.

There is no question but that Mrs. Anderson established her domicile in Ohio, the exact time, I do not know, except that it was between December 26, 1946 and January 5, 1947. *When she left Wisconsin, it was undecided whether she was going to stay or come back.*<sup>26</sup> But at the exact time when she informed her husband she was not coming back to him

<sup>25</sup> The opinion of Judge Donahue in *In re Poage* (1912), 87 Ohio St. 72, 160 N.E. 125, contains an extended discussion of *Ohio General Code* § 7996 (see 87 Ohio St., 84-5) and is of importance because the trial court's application and construction of § 7996 is very evidently the outcome of the interpretation the trial court put on that discussion. It will be noted that Judge Donahue's discussion overlooks § 8032. Section 10507-8 did not become effective until two decades later, in 1932.

<sup>26</sup> Emphasis added by counsel for Mrs. May.

but she was going to stay in Ohio, she lost her Wisconsin domicile and obtained a domicile in Ohio. 14 *O. Jur.* 582; *Sturgeon v. Korte*, 34 O.S. 525; *Smerda v. Smerda*, 35 Ohio Op. 432, 74 N.E. 2d 751.

Domicile, of course, is different from residence. A person may be domiciled in a state and yet not have residence in that state, for any number of purposes. For the purpose of divorce under our statutes residence in the state for one year is required, or for the purpose of obtaining alimony only thirty days in the state is required.

However, did the mother's change of domicile effect a change of domicile for the children? Secondly, does it matter in so far as the ability of the Wisconsin court to grant the custody of the children; or, stated simply, regardless of the domicile of the children, must they physically be within the State of Wisconsin?

*General Code of Ohio*, Section 7996, states:

[§7996.] "The husband is the head of the family. He may choose any reasonable place or mode of living and the wife must conform thereto."

Therefore, the domicile of the children originally was with the father and they were domiciled in Wisconsin. When the mother changed her domicile, did that affect the domicile of the children?

In *re Adoption of Francis*, 49 O.L.A. 427, held in an adoption proceeding; that where a Nevada divorce had been obtained by the mother, the child being at the time of the divorce in Ohio, and the father being resident in New York, the Nevada decree ordering support by the father and custody of the child to the mother, held to be null and void; and it further holds that where the child was taken from the father's domicile, *without his consent and against his will*, the child was legally domiciled in the State of New York with the father.

Let's examine the facts as we have found them here. It is true that the children were not taken into the State of Ohio, against the father's will, in the sense that the mother abducted them, or stole away in the dark of the night. The



father knew they were coming to Ohio. The facts clearly show that the children were brought into Ohio with the understanding that whichever way the mother made up her mind, relative to a divorce, the children would be brought back to Wisconsin. The Court further finds that the plaintiff, or father, asked for the return of the children, once he had been informed that the mother intended to remain in Ohio, and she refused to return them.

Under these circumstances, the Court finds that the children, while they were taken into the State of Ohio with the knowledge and consent of the plaintiff, for their temporary absence, their return was withheld against his will and without his consent, and that he had never consented to the children permanently leaving Wisconsin. The Court therefore finds that the legal domicile of the children, at the time of the filing of the divorce, and at the time of the decree in February, 1947, was in the State of Wisconsin with the father; and that the change of domicile by the mother was ineffective to change the domicile of the children.<sup>27</sup>

The Court further finds that in as much as the children were legally domiciled in Wisconsin, the Wisconsin court had jurisdiction over the subject matter and could validly award the care, custody and control of the children to the plaintiff in that action,<sup>28</sup> and their physical absence from Wisconsin was not sufficient to deprive that Court of jurisdiction in this case. In the instant case, the children had been in this State for less than ten days from the time the

<sup>27</sup> The trial court bases this holding wholly on § 7996, above. In its special findings of law, it holds (R. 82):

"The plaintiff husband in this case having never consented to change the home or domicile of said children to Ohio, and having never consented to their permanently leaving the State of Wisconsin, and the plaintiff being the *legal head of the family*, and having established a home in Wisconsin for said parties and children, the *legal domicile* of the children, on January 6, 1947, and continuing through the time of the divorce decree, was still in Waukesha county, Wisconsin, within the territorial jurisdiction of the County Court."

<sup>28</sup> The bare domicil of the children in Wisconsin is here held to have given the Wisconsin court jurisdiction to award their custody. Nowhere does the opinion cite any authority that supports this crucial holding.

mother acquired a legal domicile. To say, under those circumstances, that the original Court *lost*<sup>29</sup> jurisdiction to determine custody, is to place a premium upon the taking of children from one state to another to avoid that court's jurisdiction.

It would be most particularly true in this county, which borders upon two other states, that a court could be deprived of making a just and equitable order for the control, care and education of minor children, by the simple expedient of removing the children from the State. I do not believe, that that is the meaning of the law.

Therefore, under the peculiar circumstances of this case, I do not believe that the State of Wisconsin *lost* its right to determine the legal custody of these children. The Writ will be granted as prayed for.

Exceptions to the Defendant.

## SPECIAL FINDINGS OF LAW (R. 81-2)<sup>30</sup>

SEPTEMBER 19, 1951

As conclusions of law, stated separately from the foregoing conclusions of fact, the Court finds:

a. That this Court had jurisdiction over the parties and the subject matter, and that the Wisconsin court's decree could be questioned by both parties in so far as it related to the custody of the children.

b. The Court, however, further finds, as a matter of law, that it is required by Article IV, §1 of the Constitution of the United States, to give full faith and credit to the Wisconsin decree in all particulars, to include the adjudication of the custody of the minor children of the parties.

<sup>29</sup> The emphasis is added by counsel for Mrs. May. The trial court is holding that the jurisdiction of the Wisconsin court attached to the children *before* they left Wisconsin—i.e., before any case or proceeding respecting their custody was ever filed in any Wisconsin court.

<sup>30</sup> At the request of Mrs. May (R. 76), the Probate Court found the facts and the law separately. As the findings of law are an expression of the trial court's opinion as to the applicable law, Paragraph 1 of Rule 12 would seem to require that they be set forth in this Appendix.

c. The Court finds that the legal domicile of the minor children at the time of the filing of the divorce case [ ], was in Waukesha county, Wisconsin, and that the Waukesha County Court had jurisdiction over the subject matter involved, namely: the care, custody and control of the minor children of the parties, and, therefore, the Waukesha county, Wisconsin, divorce decree is entitled to full faith and credit in all its particulars as dealing with the care, custody and control of the minor children.

d. The Court further finds as a matter of law, in addition to the statement of facts, that Leona Anderson May did obtain a domicile in Ohio some time between December 26, 1946 and January 6, 1947, when she made up her mind to reside in Ohio and not to return to Wisconsin and so informed her husband.

[d-1.]<sup>31</sup> The Plaintiff husband in this case having never consented to change the home or domicil of said children to Ohio, and having never consented to their permanently leaving the State of Wisconsin, and the Plaintiff being the legal head of the family, and having established a home in Wisconsin for said parties and children, the legal domicile of the children, on January 6, 1947, and continuing through the time of the divorce decree, was still in Waukesha county, Wisconsin, within the territorial jurisdiction of the County Court.

e. The Court having determined that the Waukesha county, Wisconsin divorce decree was entitled to full faith and credit, as provided in Article IV, §1 of the Constitution of the United States, and that said decree gave the care, custody and control of said minor children to the Plaintiff, Owen Anderson; and, further, that said children are being held by Leona Anderson, now May, against the wishes of the Plaintiff, Owen Anderson, and against the effect of the divorce decree hereinabove stated, and therefore unlawfully and illegally, said children ought to be given into the Plaintiff's custody, as required by said decree.

<sup>31</sup> As the record shows (R. 76), these findings were dictated in open court and the paragraphing and punctuation are the reporter's, not the court's. We have therefore felt free to take minor liberties with it.

# OPINION OF COURT OF APPEALS

December 15, 1951

(Not part of record.) <sup>32</sup>

GRIFFITH, J.

The appellant here, Leona Anderson May, is seeking a reversal of the judgment of the Probate Court of Columbiana County, Ohio, entered on the 21st day of September, 1951. That court allowed a writ of Habeas Corpus ordering the three minor children of Leona Anderson May and Owen Anderson, released to the custody of the father.

The Habeas Corpus proceeding is based upon a decree of a county court of Waukesha County, Wisconsin, wherein the custody and control of the children was awarded to the father, the relator in this case. The appeal was filed on questions of law and fact, but it has been submitted to this Court by counsel on questions of law, only, it appearing that the action is not a chancery case. The following facts were stipulated:

[Here appears the Agreed Statement of Facts already quoted in full in the opinion of the trial court on pages 40 and 41 above.]

Testimony of Mrs. May and Mr. Anderson was taken and, so far as the issues in this case are concerned, that is all the record that is pertinent to the solution of the instant problem. The conduct of the father and the mother of the children following the Probate Court's announcement of its

<sup>32</sup> While the opinion of the trial court is part of the official record in the case, the opinion of the Court of Appeals is not in the record. No copy of it is filed in the case, even unofficially. To get a copy of a Court of Appeals opinion in the particular Ohio appellate district involved, it must be purchased from the secretary to the Judges. When received, it bears no official authentication of any kind. We feel obliged by paragraph 1 of Rule 12 to insert here the opinion thus purchased by us. We wish to avoid, however, any representation that it is something more than or different from what it is.

decision, reprehensible as that conduct may be on the part of each,<sup>32a</sup> has no bearing on the decision of this case.

The testimony of the father and mother bears directly on the conditions under which Mrs. May took the children from Wisconsin to Ohio.

Mr. May [i.e., plaintiff Anderson] testified [on cross-examination (R. 11, 12)]:

"A. I agreed that she could take them with her, after arguing the statement pro and con; she could take them with her. And if her mind was made up, she could settle things at home. That was the understanding I had when she left."

"Q. Did she say she would bring the children back?"

"A. She agreed to it when she left."

[ \* \* \* ]<sup>33</sup>

"Q. When you had this telephone conversation with her on New Year's day, what was said?"

"A. The only thing I can remember is, 'Owen, I'm not coming back!'"

[ \* \* \* ]<sup>34</sup>

"A. I called her up and asked her to bring the children back. [ \* \* \* ]<sup>35</sup> I asked them all to come back."

Mrs. May testified [R. 14] that at the time she left Wisconsin the children's ages were 8 years, 5 years and 18 months [and, following other testimony, further testified (R. 14, 15, 17) as follows]:

"Q. What was the purpose in coming to Ohio?"

"A. He told me to get away by myself to think it over, or what I wanted to do. Either come back to him or separate."

<sup>32a</sup> The facts respecting the conduct of each party are briefly stated in the last three paragraphs of note 14 to the Jurisdictional Statement, page 19 above.

<sup>33</sup> The opinion omits a question and answer.

<sup>34</sup> The opinion omits three questions and two answers.

<sup>35</sup> The opinion omits a question and part of an answer.



"Q. When you left Wisconsin, what was said about the children?

"A. Nothing was said. He said it was up to the court. He said he would never separate the three of them.

[ \* \* \* ]<sup>36</sup>

"Q. Was there anything said about bringing the children back to Wisconsin?

"A. Nothing was said.

"Q. What was your understanding?

"A. To come here and think it over, and I decided to stay.

"Q. What was your understanding about the children?

"A. There was no understanding. All I know was that I had them with me. When the papers were served I asked the attorneys what to do about signing the papers and they told me to stay here.

[ \* \* \* ]<sup>37</sup>

"Q. At the time you left Wisconsin had you made up your mind that you would not come back to Wisconsin?

"A. At the time I left, I really didn't know what I was going to do."

From the record before us, it is apparent that Leona Anderson May was a native of Waukesha,<sup>38</sup> Wisconsin; that she and Owen Anderson were married in the middle thirties and took up residence in Waukesha where they lived their entire married life. Their domicile and permanent home, freely chosen by both, was fixed in Waukesha up to December 26, 1946; that on December 26, 1946, Leona Anderson May left Waukesha with the three children and came directly to Lisbon, Ohio, where she established her domicile. That she brought the children to Lisbon with the knowledge and consent of the father to think over her domestic differences with her husband, and decide whether she would

<sup>36</sup> The opinion omits two questions and two answers.

<sup>37</sup> The opinion here omits two and a half pages of testimony.

<sup>38</sup> Mrs. May, although a native of Wisconsin (R. 21), was not a native of Waukesha. She came from a different part of the state.

longer live with him. That on New Year's day, she told her husband she was not coming back. That the father thereupon requested the return of the children as he had stated to the mother that the matter of their custody "was up to the court."

That on January 6, 1947, Owen Anderson filed his action in Waukesha for divorce and custody of the children and said divorce was granted to him on February 5, 1947, which decree was made in the absence of the mother and the children from the State of Wisconsin and without service or jurisdiction over them other than the substituted service in the divorce case.

The court awarded custody of the children to the father. The only service made on Leona Anderson May in the divorce case was through the Sheriff of Columbiana county, Ohio, who served her with summons and a copy of the petition. That no personal service of any nature was made upon Leona Anderson May in the State of Wisconsin. That neither she nor the children were in Wisconsin at the time the divorce petition was filed nor until long after the decree of custody and divorce was granted. That they at all times remained in Lisbon, Ohio. That in February, 1947, after the decree of divorce was granted, Owen Anderson came to Lisbon with a copy of the Waukesha court order and demanded and obtained from Mrs. May the children and took them back with him to Wisconsin.

Nothing happened during 1947, 1948, 1949, 1950, and the first half of 1951. The children remained with the father in Waukesha from 1947 until July, 1951. On July 1, 1951, Owen Anderson brought the children to Columbiana county and permitted them to visit the mother for a limited period of time. The mother now refuses to surrender the children back to the father, hence this proceeding.

When Mrs. May brought the children to Ohio in December, 1946, it was understood between her and her husband that it was a temporary and conditional taking<sup>39</sup> until she

<sup>39</sup> Mrs. May has attacked this finding throughout as contrary to the manifest weight of the evidence (R. 83) and testified that plaintiff Anderson told her she must decide either to "come back to him or separate" (R. 14).

could make up her mind regarding their marital difficulties. He permitted her to take them on this basis and if she did not return to Wisconsin, then the court would determine the matter of custody. "The court" unquestionably meant the Waukesha court which was the only court having jurisdiction over them at the time of their discussions.<sup>40</sup> She came to Ohio for a special and temporary purpose when she left Waukesha. She was uncertain as to her ever coming back.<sup>41</sup> Something occurred after she left which induced her to adopt Ohio as her permanent home.

Did the Court of Waukesha county, Wisconsin, in the divorce proceeding on substituted service against the mother when both the mother and children were in Ohio, have power or control over the children?<sup>42</sup>

Did the mother's change of domicile effect a change of domicile for the children?

The summons served in the divorce case amounted to constructive service or service by publication, although the Sheriff of Columbiana county, Ohio, personally handed Mrs. May the summons and copy of the petition.

#### WISCONSIN STATUTES, 1949

##### Section 262.12

"When the summons cannot with due diligence be served within the state, the service of the summons may be made without the state or by publication upon a defendant when it appears from the verified complaint that he is a necessary or proper party to an action or special proceeding as provided in Rule 262.13 in any of the following cases: (1) (2) (3) (4) (5) when the action is for divorce or for annulment of marriage."

<sup>40</sup> This statement is flatly contrary to the only evidence there is on the point (R. 18). It is quite clear, moreover, that when Mrs. May left Wisconsin, there had been no decision as to which of them would apply for the divorce in the event divorce was decided on (R. 15).

<sup>41</sup> It is urged that the evidence is correctly appraised by the Court of Appeals' statement that Mrs. May "was uncertain as to her ever coming back" when she left Wisconsin; not by its other inconsistent statements.

<sup>42</sup> Despite its pertinence, the Court of Appeals nowhere answers this question.

## Section 262.13

"In the cases specified in Rule 262.12 the plaintiff may, at his option, and in lieu of service by publication, cause to be delivered to any defendant personally without the state a copy of the summons and verified complaint or notice of object of action as the case may require, which delivery shall have the same effect as a completed publication and mailing."

Where were these children domiciled during the period of time between the filing of the divorce petition and the granting of the decree?

Two elements must concur to establish domicile, — (1) residence, and (2) intention of remaining.

The domicile of a minor child is normally that of the father. A minor cannot change his domicile. Was the removal of these three children from Waukesha under the circumstances, such as to effect a termination of their domicile with the father there in Wisconsin? We think not.

She brought them to Ohio on a temporary and conditional basis with the understanding that they should be returned if she decided to separate from her husband. She decided to separate and then it was that the temporary permission ended. Until she said to him over the phone on New Year's day of 1947, "Owen, I'm not coming back!"

The children were domiciled in Wisconsin until December 26, 1946, where the Wisconsin court had exclusive jurisdiction, and that court did not lose<sup>43</sup> its jurisdiction by reason of their going with their mother to Ohio to mediate and decide her program of life for the future. Temporary ab-

<sup>43</sup> All emphasis in the above passage is added by counsel for Mrs. May. As will be observed, the passage specifically repeats and thus approves the trial court's holdings (a) that the bare domicile of these children in Wisconsin gave the Wisconsin court jurisdiction to award their custody, and (b) that said jurisdiction had attached to the children before the children left Wisconsin — i.e., before any case or proceeding respecting their custody had been filed in any Wisconsin court.

sence of the children from Wisconsin<sup>41</sup> could not change their legal settlement. The Wisconsin court did not lose jurisdiction while they were temporarily in Ohio.

While the facts in each of these cases are entirely different from the case before us, we believe the reasoning in the cases of *Cohen v. Judge*, 13 Ohio Appeals, 449, *Keenan v. Keenan*, 17 Ohio Dec. N. P. 581, *Black v. Black*, 110 O. S. 392, supports our conclusions.<sup>42</sup>

The children were in Ohio with his consent and permission. After that announcement, he demanded that she return the children, which demand was ignored. The children from that time forward were in Ohio against his will and without his permission. It was during that period of time that the divorce proceedings were commenced and concluded. The change of the domicile of the mother under these circumstances, did not in any wise effect a change of the domicile of the children.

The Court had no alternative but to allow the writ and its judgment on that order will be affirmed.

*Judgment affirmed.*

PHILLIPS, J., concurs.

NICHOLS, P. J.

I cannot concur in holding that the Court of Waukesha, Wisconsin, had jurisdiction to award custody of the minor children of the parties to that action, for the reason that such children were not within the jurisdiction of that court at the time the petition for divorce was filed, or at the time the decree was rendered.

<sup>41</sup> It will be observed that, by thus holding, as a matter of law, that the children were only "temporarily absent" from Wisconsin, the Court of Appeals accepts also the Probate Court's holding that § 7996 deprived their mother of the legal power to alter their domicile.

<sup>42</sup> If the cases the court cites are examined, it will be found that the decision in *Keenan v. Keenan* went off on a point that makes it irrelevant here, that the *ratio decidendi* in *Cohen v. Judge* is flatly opposed to the position here taken by the Court of Appeals, and that *Black v. Black*, to the extent it is in point (and we think it is in point), is also flatly opposed to that position. Thus the opinion of the Court of Appeals, like the opinion of the Probate Court, is entirely barren of any authority that supports the result reached.



However, if I am right in my finding that the Waukesha court did not have jurisdiction, then this Habeas Corpus proceeding in Columbiana county was one solely to determine which of two parents having equal rights to children should be awarded custody thereof since the parents are not living together and cannot have joint custody and control thereof.

In this case, in the proceeding in Columbiana county, the court's judgment awarding custody to the father is entirely supported by the evidence and is for the best interests of the children.

I, therefore, concur in the judgment for the reasons stated.

(NOTE BY APPELLANT'S COUNSEL: As stated at the opening of the jurisdictional statement under the heading "The Issue", the custody award required by the welfare of children is, in Ohio, an issue that habeas corpus *cannot* be used to try. And as the Probate Court notes at the end of the third paragraph of its opinion proper, no such issue was tried in this case.

(Since the issue of the children's welfare could not be and therefore was not tried in this case, it would be unfair to plaintiff Anderson to draw any inference as to that issue from evidence that came in on other issues. However, if such an inference were nevertheless to be drawn from that evidence, it would be the opposite of that stated in the foregoing concurring opinion.)

## OPINION OF THE SUPREME COURT OF OHIO

*Anderson, Appellee, v. May, Appellant*, 157 Ohio St. 436, 105 N. E. 2d 648.

April 2, 1952.

It is ordered and adjudged that this appeal of right be, and the same hereby is, dismissed for the reason that no debatable constitutional question is involved.

*Appeal dismissed.*

Weygandt, C. J., Middleton, Matthias and Hart, JJ.  
concur.<sup>46</sup>

<sup>46</sup> As is evident from the fact that the report does not show part of the Judges "not participating", the case was heard before a full court of seven judges. As the report shows only the Chief Justice and three judges concurring, three Judges who participated did *not* concur. They were Stewart, Taft and Zimmerman, JJ.

(3364)